



# pRide



THE NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR

SUMMER, 2002

RHODE ISLAND STATE EMPLOYEES

## Local Research Study to be Published in National Journal

The *Journal of Rehabilitation* will publish a study co-authored by **Thomas Mannock, M.A., C.A.G.S.**, of the RI Department of Administration (DOA), **Janice Prochaska, Ph.D.**, and **Debbie Levesque, Ph.D.** of Pro-Change Behavior Systems, Inc., a small research and design business located at the University of Rhode Island.

The research was conducted over an 18-month period at the Dr. John E. Donley Rehabilitation Center in Providence. The Center is the workers' compensation and rehabilitation component of the RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT), and has a long history of providing the highest quality restorative and rehabilitation care to injured RI workers collecting Workers' Compensation benefits.

The study is titled, "Assessing Readiness of Clients with Disabilities to Engage in Job Seeking Behaviors", and will appear in the summer issue of the *Journal of Rehabilitation*.

The study measures the "readiness" of spinal cord injured clients engaged in vocational counseling to return to the workforce.

Nationally, return-to-work rates for spinal cord injured clients have remained relatively low for many decades. One approach that is gaining recognition, suggests that matching vocational counseling activities to client sub-groups based on "readiness profiles" may be more effective at facilitating client transition back to the workforce as compared to traditional one-size-fits-all programs. "It is essential that we continuously research new return-to-work approaches that can maximize vocational counseling effectiveness and increase positive vocational outcomes for our clients", says **Jean Severance**, Associate Director, Division of Workers' Compensation.

The study applied the Theoretical Model of Change developed by **James Prochaska, Ph.D.** and **Wayne Velicer, Ph.D.** of the University of Rhode Island to the vocational counseling arena. The Transtheoretical Model is the most utilized approach currently in the health behavior change field.

The findings of this study support the contention that spinal cord injured clients entering vocational counseling do so at different levels of readiness to seek employment and return to the workforce. The results of this study will be used to explore the feasibility of developing tailored vocational counseling activities and interventions to individual client profiles based on readiness. The ultimate goal is to develop vocational transition programs and activities that will significantly increase return-to-work rates for spinal cord injured clients as they exit physical therapy and vocational counseling.

## Cold War Relic Makes History, Hollywood

The Occupational Safety Division of the Department of Labor and Training (DLT), recently conducted an inspection of the historic Soviet submarine, the *Juliett 484*, tied-up at Fields Point, off Allens Avenue, Providence, at the request of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Under the guidance of Chief **Benjamin Anthony**, Boiler and Pressure Vessel Unit, two new air compressors were inspected, found to be in satisfactory condition, and certified under RI Law, enabling the aging Russian vessel to operate safely as a submersible vessel with new American-made compressors.



Tied-up at Fields Point, the Soviet submarine *Juliett 484* awaits transport to Quonset Point where it will be converted into a museum and paired with a retired American aircraft carrier the *USS Saratoga*.

This Cold War relic has played several roles. Launched in 1968 during the heart of the Cold War, it cruised close to our shores for 20 years; was used in Hollywood storytelling, and tentatively, it will now become a living record of times past. Recently, it was used in the movie *K-11*, starring Harrison Ford and Liam Neeson. The rehabilitated sub is slated to become a museum, floating along side the retired American aircraft carrier *USS Saratoga*, at the Air, Land & Sea Heritage Park in North Kingstown, RI.

The Boiler and Pressure Unit of DLT safeguards public health by preventing explosions or fire hazards, inspecting approximately 10,000 systems per year in commercial establishments and places of public assembly such as churches, child-care centers and hospitals. For more information on the proposed museum, visit <http://www.saratogamuseum.org/>.

Submitted by: Nicole Romeo, DLT



## Responding to Trauma

After trauma, people go through a wide range of normal responses. Such reactions are experienced not only by people who were involved in the trauma first-hand, but often also by those who have either witnessed or heard about or have had different kinds of involvement with the person or persons immediately affected. Many reactions tend to be triggered by persons, places, or things associated with the trauma. Some reactions may appear totally unrelated. Here is a list of common physical and emotional reactions to trauma, as well as a list of helpful coping strategies. These are **NORMAL** reactions to **ABNORMAL** events.

**Physical Reactions** – aches and pains like headaches, back-aches, stomach aches • sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations (fluttering) • changes in sleep patterns, appetite, interest in sex • constipation or diarrhea • easily startled by noises or unexpected touch • more susceptible to colds and illnesses.

**Emotional Reactions** – shock and disbelief • fear and/or anxiety • grief • disorientation • denial • hyper-alertness or hyper vigilance • irritability and/or restlessness • outbursts of anger or rage • emotional swings – like crying and then laughing • worrying or ruminating – intrusive thoughts of the trauma • nightmares • flashbacks – feeling like the trauma is happening now • feelings of helplessness • feelings of panic or feeling out of control • increased need to control everyday experiences • minimizing the experience • attempts to avoid anything associated with trauma • tendency to isolate oneself • feelings of detachment • concern over burdening others with problems • emotional numbing • restricted range of feelings • difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal • difficulty concentrating or remembering • increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating • feelings of self-blame • survivor guilt • shame • diminished interest in everyday activities • depression • unpleasant past memories resurfacing • loss of a sense of order or fairness in the world • expectation of doom and fear of the future.

**Helpful Coping Strategies** – mobilize support system – reach out and connect with others, especially those who may have shared the stressful event • talk about the traumatic experience • cry • hard exercise like jogging, aerobics, bicycling, walking • relaxation exercise like yoga, stretching, massage • humor • prayer and/or meditation • hot baths • music and art • maintain balanced diet and sleep cycle as much as possible • avoid overusing stimulants like caffeine, sugar, nicotine • commitment to something personally meaningful and important every day • hug those you love: hugging releases endogenous opioids, the body's natural pain killer – (now you know why it can feel so good!) • eat warm turkey, boiled onions, baked potatoes, cream-based soups – these warm foods are tryptophane activators which can help you feel tired but good (like after Thanksgiving dinner) • pro-active response toward personal/community safety: organize or do something socially active • write about your experience – in detail, just for yourself or to share with others.

People are usually surprised that reactions to trauma last longer than expected. It may take weeks, months, and in some cases, years, to regain equilibrium. Many people will get through this period on their own, with the help and support of family and friends. But too often friends and family push you to “get over it” before you're ready, or encourage feeling sorry for or trying to understand the perpetrator. Remind them that such responses are not helpful for recovery right now. Many people find that individual, group, or family counseling is helpful. Either way, the key word is **ATTACHMENT** – ask for help, support, understanding, and opportunities to talk.

The Chinese character for crisis is a combination of two words – danger and opportunity. Hardly anyone would choose to be traumatized as a vehicle for growth. Yet our experience shows that people are incredibly resilient, and the worst of traumas and crises can become enabling, empowering transformations.

c. 1989 Dr. Pattie Levin

Submitted by: LifeWatch Employee Assistance Program

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The State of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity and diversity employer and reasonable accommodations will be provided. For assistance, call EEO Office at 222-3090. (TDD 222-6144)

## Confidentiality

LifeWatch is the employee assistance program for State of Rhode Island employees. This program is a confidential and free service to all State workers and their household members.

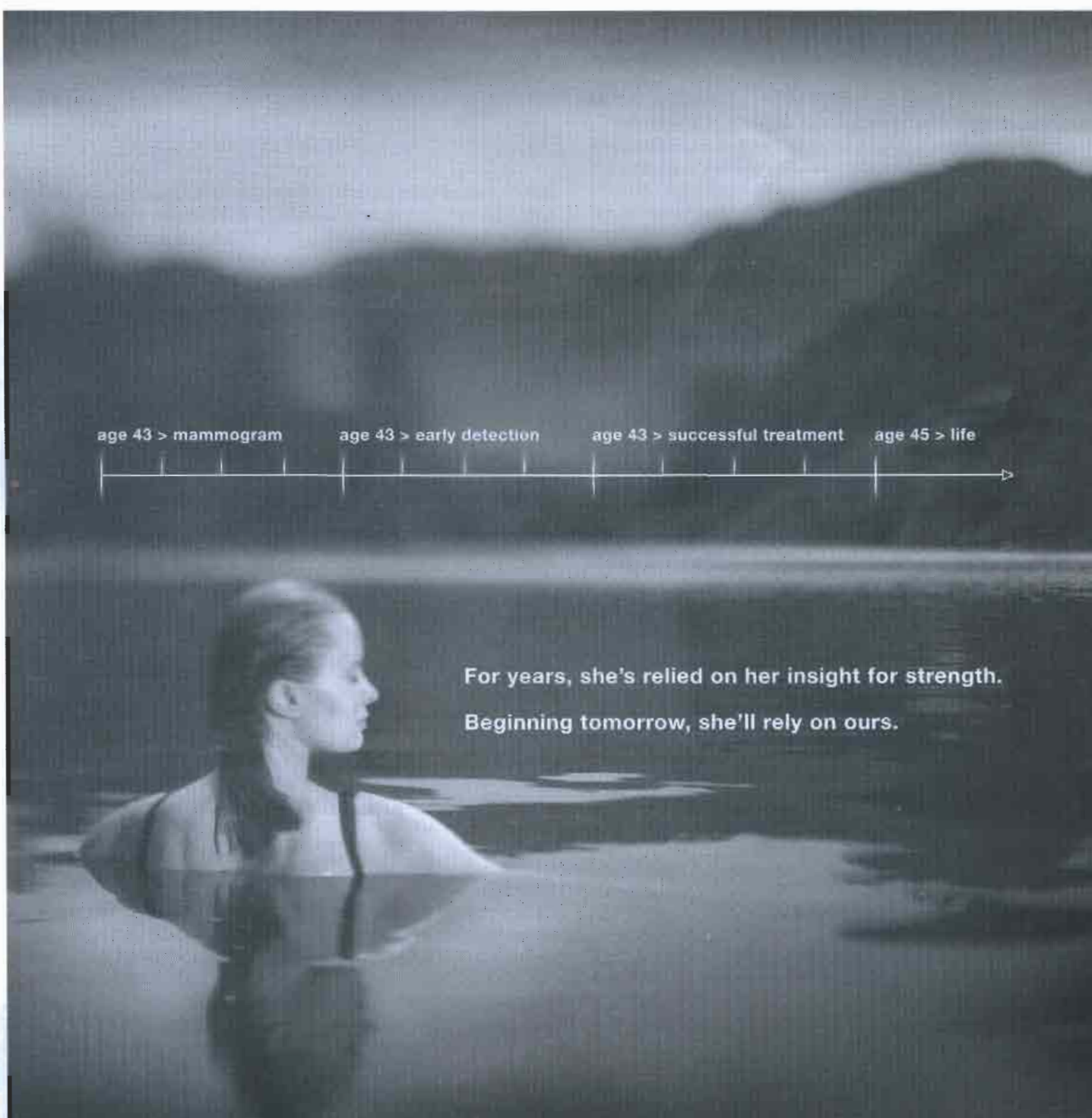
At times, employees are formally referred to the EAP when their job performance is unacceptable, in order to determine if there are personal problems affecting job performance. In these cases, the employer has a legitimate interest in obtaining information from LifeWatch concerning the employee's attendance, cooperation with EAP's recommendations, the employee's fitness to safely perform job duties or a general assessment of the employee's progress. However, LifeWatch EAP is still required to follow federal and state laws regarding confidentiality.

Confidentiality laws require written consent from the employee in order for the EAP to disclose any information. The information authorized to be disclosed will be limited to only the information that the employer has a legitimate need to know (see above).

The EAP will also be limited to disclosing the information only to the person who is designated on the consent form. If an employee refuses to sign a consent form (release of information form), the EAP is prohibited by federal law to disclose any information. The exceptions are if the employee is a danger to himself or others, or abusing children or the elderly.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact LifeWatch EAP at 1-800-333-6228, TTY/TT 1-800-745-5555 or [www.lifewatch-eap.com/](http://www.lifewatch-eap.com/).





age 43 > mammogram

age 43 > early detection

age 43 > successful treatment

age 45 > life

For years, she's relied on her insight for strength.  
Beginning tomorrow, she'll rely on ours.

There are certain things in life which we hope never to encounter. But we can be prepared – with a health plan that not only looks after you, it looks ahead for you. A health plan that promotes preventative care, with such features as exam reminders, nutritional counseling, and personalized patient-physician relationships. That health plan is BlueCHiP, the plan focused on keeping you healthy, so you can focus on another important matter. Life.



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[www.bcbsri.com](http://www.bcbsri.com)

BlueCHiP is offered by Coordinated Health Partners, Inc. A wholly-owned subsidiary of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island. Both are independent licensees of the BlueCross BlueShield Association.



## pRIde in performance



The Quirk Institute of Industrial Relations at Providence College recently presented **Robert Plante**, associate director of MHRH's division of human resource management, with the Rev. Charles B. Quirk, O.P. Award in recognition of his "exemplary contributions to furthering the cause of industrial peace."

The prestigious award is presented each year to professionals in the labor and management communities for their work to promote cooperation and mutual respect for the issues that affect industrial relations.

Plante began his tenure at MHRH in 1980, and from the beginning was committed to improving labor-management at the department. In presenting the award, Francis O'Brien, director of the Quirk Institute, noted that over the course of his career, Plante has "ably forged a cooperative and respectful labor-management relationship with the 2100 dedicated employees who serve Rhode Island's most vulnerable citizens."

Further, Plante's "pro-active approach to labor relations has proved to be an effective and compassionate way to bring management and workers together to define areas of mutual concern and agreement. As a result, the state has gained a strong, motivated workforce while employees enjoy a stable working environment."

Under Plante's leadership, with cooperation of AFSCME Council 94 and Local 1293, the Joint Labor-Management Council was established to improve communication, form employee involvement teams and promote a collaborative climate.

The International Personnel Management Association recognized his professional contributions by awarding him the Charles Cushman Award in 2000.

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The RI Commission on Women has announced that the RICW 2002 Woman of the Year is Senator **June N. Gibbs**, who has worked tirelessly for decades on behalf of women, particularly in the areas of health care, child care, and long term care. Senator Gibbs is a member of the Newport County League. The 2002 Woman of the Year Reception and Award Dinner was held in May at the Crowne Plaza at the Crossings, Warwick.

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The RI Chapter of the American Planning Association presented their Distinguished Leadership Award for 2001 to **Derry Riding**, Principal Planner for the Statewide Planning Program. The Award is presented to a professional planner, elected official, or citizen planner for sustained contribution to the profession through distinguished practice, teaching or writing. Derry's selection was in recognition of an unyielding pursuit of excellence in the development and implementation of Rhode Island's planning and development framework, and her constant presence in assisting municipal planners, state agencies, community officials, and citizens in understanding and coping with the new comprehensive planning zoning, and land development review processes and procedures. Derry is President of the Bristol League, a Vice-President of the State League, and President of the LWVRI Education Fund.

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**Kathleen M. McKeon** of Cranston was cited as the 2002 Social Worker of the Year in Aging by the National Association of Social Workers, RI Chapter. McKeon is Assistant Director for the state Department of Elderly Affairs (DEA) and has served with that agency for more than 27 years. McKeon was one of several community advocates who were honored during the

2002 Professional Social Worker Month annual awards celebration held during March in Providence.

During her tenure at DEA, McKeon has worked with issues affecting seniors such as elder abuse and protective services, home and community care, and family caregiver support.

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The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) has announced that **Therese M. Lusignan** of the Bureau of Audits has successfully completed the Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) examination.

The CIA exam, administered twice a year in several languages, was given in May to approximately 7,300 candidates at 213 sites in 67 countries around the world. Of these candidates, over 1,100 have completed the examination requirement and are eligible to become Certified Internal Auditors. The CIA exam reflects the current state of the art in internal auditing and evaluates technical competence in important subject areas related to internal auditing.

The more than 36,000 Certified Internal Auditors worldwide are members of a recognized professional group and benefit from rapid career advancement and greater acceptance in the role as advisor to management.

Established in 1941, The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) is an international professional association with world headquarters in Altamonte Springs, FLA. The IIA has more than 76,000 members in internal auditing, risk management, governance, internal control, IT audit, education, and security. With representation from more than 100 countries, The Institute is the recognized authority, principal educator, and acknowledged leader in certification, research, and technological guidance for the profession worldwide.

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**Stanley Severance** of the Department of Transportation (DOT) has won the Alan Shawn Feinstein Merit Award for Outstanding Community Service. Severance was nominated by Karen Dionne, Director of the Rhode Island College Outreach Programs for his dedication in working with immigrants and refugees through the RIC Outreach Programs. The selection committee was especially impressed by his commitment and concern for this segment of Rhode Island's population. In addition, Severance has an outstanding work ethic and is a great asset to the Real Estate Section of DOT. He was recently appointed by Governor Lincoln Almond to the Real Estate Appraisers Board, belongs to Roadwatchers, volunteers at all Department blood drives, and assisted the Department with the NASTO Conference. Recipients of the award are selected by a committee of community leaders from nominations solicited annually from over 1,000 non profit organizations. The recipients are Rhode Islanders who have performed exceptional public service of some duration in their community and have received little or no previous recognition for their work.

The Feinstein Merit Award was created by The Rhode Island Foundation to honor Rhode Island philanthropist Alan Shawn Feinstein's commitment to public service. Each winner receives a certificate of merit and a \$500. award.

*Continued on Page 5*



## In Retrospect or Confessions of a Software Junkie

By

Mariano Rodriguez

My life with computers began when I was asked to teach a course in BASIC at the college level. I believed then, as I believe now, that before I can teach it, I should be a practitioner. So I wrote a complete program to manage my grades using BASIC. This involved all of the programming skills that I had to teach, so it was good preparation.

Years later, I was called upon to write a dBase program for Union management. This time, I bought a computer and a full dBase package, and I set out to write interactive programs for other people. It was about 1984-85 when I was also asked by two organizations on the same day to serve as their treasurer. I thought not. But that very day, I was in a computer store and saw a package that teaches how to do a simple accounting package in dBase. I thought this was a message from above, so I obeyed the call. I learned accounting as I wrote programs to manage the financial practices of my Union and my Barbershop Chorus. Treasurer's Assistant for Barbershop Chapters, was quite successful, and at the height of its popularity, was used by as many as 150 chapters. While I was at it, I re-wrote my grade book program using dBase. Grader was favorably reviewed in *PC Magazine*, and I developed a following for that software.

Using my database experience, I also wrote programs to manage my chorus membership information and to produce its annual Directory. This grew into managing the Directory for the next level of organization in the Barbershopping world, the District. But for this Directory and for the Chapter Directory, I became involved with typesetting programs, so that I could produce professional looking directories. Gradually, this interest pulled me into typography and graphics. I was now producing not only Directories, but also brochures, flyers, etc. using Ventura Publisher. This involved learning to do something called tagged text.

By now, I was a software junkie. Instead of computer games, I spent my time having fun learning to typeset and do page layout while interfacing with databases. For this, I had to learn to move information from one form to another with ease. I had to learn OCR to transform printed copy of text into computerized word processing files. I had to learn to transform tables of printed data into databases for better management.

During this time, I continued my usual affairs by selecting software that accomplishes what I want with ease and efficiency. When I could not find such software, I would write it. I selected Mathematics software that would make my preparation of math classes better, faster, easier. I wrote Testing software so that I could conduct my classes electronically.

Other than BASIC, none of this was considered to be professionally related to my job. The connectedness of all this to teaching math and computer science was simply not clear at all – and perhaps still isn't.

In 1995, something significant happened. **Dave Armitage** and **Allison Fraile** started up a web server on a spare machine at Rhode Island College. They let me in on it. This was like a fish being set free in water. The web was upon us, and it drew together all of my learn-

ing from the previous fifteen years. I became a web author. I moved quickly from paper publishing to Web publishing. One of the things that made this possible was the fact that I had always selected software that would accomplish what I needed efficiently and professionally.

Working with the Web has involved me in a variety of situations. My courses are now web-assisted. Digital photography has rekindled my interest in visually recording what I see. I created a web site for Friends of the Pawtuxet. One of the features is a visual catalog of wildflowers I find on my walks in the area. I also try to capture birds in photos, but that is a much more difficult task. Having learned to access databases on the Web, I created Member sites for the Barbershoppers, and I created **rinonsmokers.org** a web site to promote the rights of non-smokers and to help people find smoke-free restaurants interactively.

Last winter, **Kate Sanders** developed an initiative to get things started with **Beverly Dwyer** at the Human Resources/Outreach and Diversity Division. This made it possible to set up a dozen interns. This spring, I supervised interns, some working with Beverly, and some working at Smithfield Middle School. This was a wonderful opportunity for students to go out into the community to work, while getting academic credit. They had to learn to analyze situations and communicate the solutions. Some of them had to work on Web Sites. There is lasting value in the work done by the students.

I have enjoyed working with the interns, and I look forward to continuing this program.

Now, for my next software program . . .

## pRide in performance

(continued from page 4)

At a recent Quarterly Staff Meeting, MHRH Director A. Kathryn Power named **Nick Leporacci** the Department's newest Superior Peer. In addition to his expertise in information technology and involvement in making state-of-the-art systems available to employees on a daily basis, Director Power noted that as problems occur, Leporacci has helped to quickly resolve them, restoring the smooth operation of the department's information systems. Power also mentioned recent projects for the department's pharmacy services and the Zambano Unit of the Eleanor Slater Hospital that Leporacci managed successfully.

"For your cooperative efforts and willingness to take on new challenges, I thank you on behalf of all who have benefited from the advanced information technology made available to support our individual responsibilities," Power concluded.

Also recognized at the Quarterly Staff Meeting were **Kevin Richard**, **Hugh Friel** and **William McDevitt**. Director Power presented each with a certificate of appreciation that read, "For your outstanding efforts during the power crisis, and for meeting the enormous challenges presented by the breakdowns at the Power Plant. Your contribution to the maintenance and operation of very old and problematic systems requires diligence, professionalism and the highest degree of expertise. In addition, you have met the added responsibility to provide information to the design engineer for the construction of the new Power Plant, ensuring that the new design will work efficiently. You have responded effectively to every request and your assistance has greatly benefited everyone involved in the project."



| Go to Ball Game. Catch ball in mouth.

| Get caps.

| Watch Game on TV.

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| *M o n d a y*

| *S a t u r d a y*

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